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**ABSTRACT**

The present invention relates a novel antimicrobial peptide HBD-3 and derivatives thereof as well as the gene encoding the peptide. The invention further relates to methods of use of the HBD-3 peptide including a method of inhibiting microbial growth by administering an effective amount of the HBD-3 peptide alone or in combination with other antimicrobial agents or antibiotics. In addition, the immunomodulatory properties of the HBD-3 peptide also facilitate the manipulation of the immune response, *i.e.*, as a chemoattractant for immature dendritic cells or memory T cells.

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